

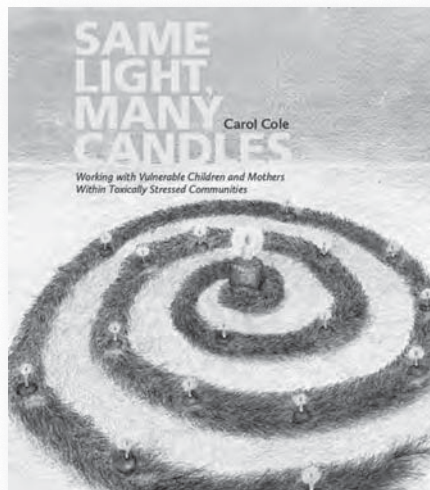
## ***Same Light, Many Candles***

by Carol Cole

Reviewed by Susan Howard

The needs of children and families threatened by homelessness in the San Francisco Bay area moved Carol Cole to found the Sophia Project. The challenges of homelessness and its accompanying trials, without the outer supports provided by a more conventional Waldorf setting, led Carol to embark on a journey of exploration and service that took her far beyond her decades of experience as a Waldorf early childhood educator. Guided by the image of Sophia, her journey was a process of learning to perceive and practice what it means to be truly human in our troubled times, working on behalf of young children and their mothers. A healing oasis for children and mothers, the Sophia Project was the result of this journey, a product of inner conviction, courage, imagination, and love.

The Sophia Project is action research of the highest order, demanding tremendous inner and outer effort on the part of Carol and her husband David. Their efforts were backed up by significant spiritual and financial support from the wider anthroposophical, Waldorf, and Camphill communities. The fruit of their work is astonishing—families have become



healthier and stayed intact. A significant number of Sophia Project children are now in college. No Sophia Project family has ever returned to homelessness. All this is a result of the intensive therapeutic early childhood programs, respite care, art projects, and family support the Sophia Project offered.

Waldorf early childhood education is being called upon to articulate what is essential and unique in our

Waldorf approach. Carol Cole's book provides an inspiring articulation of this. Her wonderful account of the Sophia Project provides us with insights into both the invisible essentials as well as the concrete resources necessary for that work.

Today many of us long to find ways to reach out beyond privileged communities to work directly with what Carol calls "vulnerable children and mothers within toxically stressed communities." Childhood itself is vulnerable today; all families and communities suffer from some degree of "toxic stress". Each of us can find inspiration for both our inner and outer work through *Same Light, Many Candles*. WECAN is honored to add this treasure to our collection of publications. ♦